

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

*Fifth Series*

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 403. — VOL. VIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1891.

PRICE 1½d.

## THAT SUPPLE BACKBONE.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

As we cannot have everything in life we must content ourselves with a portion, and he is the wisest man among us who knows most clearly what portion he desires and bends all his energies with most earnestness in trying for it. But he is a fool who wants two irreconcilable things—who thinks he can hold with the hare and run with the hounds, and turn up smiling with the victors at the end. One of two contraries a man has to choose between—the stiff upper lip of the independent or the supple backbone of the time-server. If the former, he will keep his own self-respect and gain the respect of others, but also he will be sure to have the ill-will of his superiors, and be under the frost of those whose doubtful bottles he refuses to hold and whose muddy boots he declines to black. If the latter, he will in all probability come to worldly success, and find grateful patrons willing to give him a good push forward in return for his complaisance to them. But though he may be praised as a good-natured accommodating fellow, he will not be esteemed; nor will he be able to respect himself—conscious, as he will be, that he has not kept alight the sacred flame of masculine honour. All the same, that supple backbone will lead him far; and if that is what he wants, let him rejoice and be glad—but he must not be nice as to the road by which he travels nor the means by which he arrives.

Co-trustee with the unscrupulous scoundrel, but himself not naturally dishonest, that supple backbone has rather a heavy load to bear. A few years ago that clipper A1 at Lloyd's cost seventeen thousand pounds, and to-day is even in better condition than when she was built. The trustees decide to sell her for the benefit of the widows and orphans. The strong-willed superior so decides; that supple backbone of the inferior bends as usual and acquiesces. The ship is sold to the brother of the former, who gives seven

hundred pounds for his bargain; and the latter has not the courage to remonstrate. He does not pocket a 'red cent' himself, but he has not grit enough to stand out for justice and honesty, and so consents unto sinners, and is lost with them in the same deep pit of shame.

The managing clerk of a conscienceless attorney, with that supple backbone draws out a bill of costs that will stint the poor client for many a year to come—writes down the heads of an affidavit which he requests the unwary dupe to sign at the foot of the page, leaving a wide space of blank paper between—carries the hush-money by which a dangerous witness is bought off and justice effectually defeated—carries the bribe by which a double tongue is secured, and he who would have told the truth is bound now to the maintenance of a lie. All this he does without remonstrance, without hesitation—not because he is indifferent, but because he is a coward and a tool, and that supple backbone has not the power to stand upright when the hand of a stronger is laid on it. What indeed will not one of this kind do when under such pressure! There is no villainy for which a tool is wanting. Were all men who are not naturally evil, stiff-backed, there would be infinitely less crime than there is. That supple spine makes itself the hand to do the dirty work of the stronger; and between the bold brain to plan and the complaisant agent to effect, no crime is too bad, too base, or too mean to fail in execution. Ah! that supple backbone has much to answer for! As the receiver is as bad as the thief, so is the living tool that does the work as guilty as the one who plans the deed. His weakness matches the other's boldness, and is as the powder by which the ball is sped.

That supple backbone finds no more difficulty in flattery than it found in complaisance. The veriest old hag with money has her poet to praise and her artist to flatter her; the dullest block that ever wore a wig has courtiers as grovelling as worms, and with backbones as supple as that of the looped caterpillar, if he is highly placed and grandly named and standing on

the stage where the rich and powerful assemble. Men and women, with spinal columns as flexible as so many reeds, gather about the titled block and belaud and bepraise him as though he were a nineteenth-century demigod born within the sound of Bow Bells, instead of as in olden times to the chanting of Homeric hymns and the cries of *Evoë, Evoë!* No matter by what shady means he has made his money—it is made, and it is money. He has the influence of wealth, of position, of social power; and the flexible backbones bend before him, proud in their self-abasement. They are all on the lookout for crumbs, like so many gaping carp at the edge of a pond; and when those crumbs are thrown, then is their satisfaction assured and their self-abasement complete.

On all Boards, Committees, and the like, is sure to be such a proportion of these supple backbones as ensures the due despatch of business. Every 'strong' man has his following, and these outnumber the dissentients, who, moreover, do not organise. Talk of pocket boroughs—why! every man who does public business knows what it is to have so many votes in his hand, safely lodged there simply because of the suppleness of sundry backbones! In all parochial work the supple backbones carry the day. When by chance a rector is weaker than his recalcitrant parishioners, the coil into which things get is lamentable; for the minister is *ex officio* the lawful head, but what can the lawful head do when opposed by a rebellious tail? This supple class of backbone, indeed, is the very essence of party government. The units of the party must have no sense of right or wrong—must not harbour such an inconvenient thing as a conscience—must look on a stiff upper lip as a moral blemish—must cultivate a willowy set of vertebrae, which sway into the right hand lobby or the left according to the bidding of the fugleman. The independent members are like those strange bodies which fall to the earth unbidden, no one can calculate when or where. But the supple kind make the life of the party and the continuance of the ministry.

What is public opinion but the consentaneous swaying of the supple backbones of society, as the ears of a barley-field which the wind passes over? Shout a thing loud enough, and shout it often enough, and you will get believers and repeaters and followers. It is all a matter of strength of lungs and suppleness of backbones. The few who dare to stand out against the popular cry of the moment are those unmanageable creatures with stiff upper lips—too stiff to bear with hooks and bridles. The majority are glad to be saved the trouble of independent judgment, and the still greater trouble of digging down to the root of things. Those supple backbones cannot do this. The utmost they can accomplish in that way is a little surface scratching about the upper part of the field—there where Public Opinion is shouting out her laws. When they have scratched about as deep as a bumble-bee might, they proclaim themselves satisfied and illuminated. Then they, too, bow before the 'mawmet' of the moment and invoke anathemas on those bold 'pies' who dare to

intone their psalms in a different key. Think of what would have befallen the man with the stiff upper lip and independent judgment who, when the rushing crowds tore through the streets of Paris shouting 'à Berlin, à Berlin,' had confronted them with a negation and an exhortation to turn back and leave off screeching! They would have made short work of such a one; and the supplest of those swaying backbones would have been the cruellest in the punishment. No; it requires exceptional courage to stand out against a popular cry; and only those who have cultivated clearness of understanding, honesty of purpose, and boldness of mind, can face the obloquy resulting from the opposition. That supple backbone which bends to the breeze and swims with the stream is then the safest—whether the most respectable profession is another matter.

Even in private life, where sweetness of disposition and complaisance of habits are of prime importance, a swaying backbone, over-supple, is a nuisance rather than a pleasure. Tyrants alone like to live with slaves; but even they will compound for the shock to their dignity given by the insubordination of a rebel, for the pleasure they have in crushing him. But not the hardest-handed husband—not the most self-willed wife, likes to feel that the 'environment' in which he or she lives is nothing but one great amorphous mass of jelly—a slimy slippery substance which yields on all sides and takes no permanent shape—which has no form and no colour and no independent life of its own, but is just a slippery slimy mass to be run into any mould that is desired. A woman who has no opinions of her own, no principles, no thoughts that are not prompted, no likings that are not shared, becomes in time more irksome than even a fiery little 'scrat' who fights over the best way of making mutton broth, as if it were a matter of vital importance to body and soul, and who refuses to be guided or governed by living man or established code. If this last bantam is provoking, the invertebrate molluscous creature is maddening. Swansdown is all very well in its place, but when we want a serviceable rope we take hemp or haphy metal and let the soft stuff fly into space. To be able to say No to another's Yes is sometimes both necessary and wholesome, and also gives more happiness than the more servile echo. There are occasions when that No is our bounden duty—when the echoed Yes would be a sin. But sin or not, that supple backbone sways to the side of Yes; and what mischief can be caused by this complacency is caused—with no self-blame accruing.

So that on the whole a supple backbone is a doubtful good, for all the sweetness and good temper with which it is associated. It can so easily run over into servility—into unfaithfulness—into want of self-respect all round! We all have our hidden treasures of thought and principle to guard; and we must keep that dragon we call our conscience awake and not set it to sleep with cakes here or sweet songs there. And we all have that thing we call our self-respect to maintain; and when the backbone is too supple, this slips away like that jelly we spoke of, and we hold it no more as our own. As a rule, this invertebrate molluscousness does not belong to the northern nations; but even they need to

be prodded now and then—to be brought back from over-suppleness by reminders of what the brave past was, and what it did for them and gave them.

## DUMARESQ'S DAUGHTER.

### CHAPTER XL.—THE MYSTERY SOLVED.

To Haviland Dumaresq's delight and surprise, Psyche still bore up bravely. Why, it would have been hard indeed to say. Whether, in spite of herself and her gloomy presentiments, she still cherished internally some secret hope that Linnell after all might have escaped from Khartoum and across the desert to Biskra, he hardly knew; but in any case, he was pleased to find her still so buoyant. He hugged himself on the discovery. This trouble would pass over in the end, he felt sure. The mistress of such a splendid fortune as hers must surely be happy!

Poor sordid old thinker! For himself, he would have scouted all ideas of gain; but for Psyche—he was as greedy as the veriest owner-grubber in the city of London. Nay, in his own mind, Haviland Dumaresq already gave himself, on Psyche's behalf, all the airs and importance of a wealthy person. Psyche was now a lady of position. He could hardly help letting Sirena feel the difference in his treatment of herself. And even to Psyche he often implied by a half-uttered side-hint that he regarded her as the possessor of a great estate, with infinite possibilities for the future still lying before her.

But Psyche, poor Psyche, only shrank back in horror from the hideous thought, and cried to herself with unspeakable remorse, a thousand times over, 'His money! His money! And I sent him to his death! I could never touch a single penny of it.'

And still she bore up, till despair should deepen into perfect certainty. For her father's sake, and with all the force of her father's nature, she strove to be calm; she schooled herself to fortitude—till news should come from Biskra.

One bright afternoon, Sirena and Dumaresq had taken her between them out upon the dry African hillside, where the pine-trees grew green and the broom blossomed yellow, and the chirp of the cicadas resounded from the rosemary. They seated her down on the arid rocks, under the shadow of a tall and flowery eucalyptus. Birds sang, and bees hummed, and in the valley beneath the murmur of water plashed among the stickles. The high-road to Birmandreis ran just below them as they sat, and Psyche, looking down at it, with all her might, half fancied she could dimly make out a long white line that threaded the valley; for her eyes were almost wholly blinded now, and she never expected to see any more with them.

As she looked, however, and strained her eyeballs, dark objects passed now and then in shadowy show along the white strip, as one may sometimes see reflections from the street thrown up in vague outline on the ceiling through the curtains. One of them, Sirena said, was an Arab on a donkey; another, a cart going in to Algiers with fruit for the market; a third, a group of veiled Moorish women, coming home from their weekly visit to the cemeteries. Psyche could

dimly realise, when told, how each object answered to Sirena's description.

And then came a fourth, a smaller one than the rest; and that, Sirena imprudently blurted out, was a telegraph boy from the office at Mustapha Palais.

At the word, Psyche's heart rose up to her mouth within her. She followed the dark spot vaguely along the dim white line. 'He's going to the Orangers,' she cried with a start, as the object halted against a second white blur in the distance. Then the truth flashed across her with a wild surmise. 'Sirena, Sirena, it's a telegram from Biskra!'

Sirena, alarmed at her own imprudence, ran down the hill in hot haste and tore it open hurriedly. It was addressed outside to Haviland Dumaresq; but in her flurry and excitement she never paused for a moment to hesitate over trifles like that. A question of life and death was at issue now. She unfolded the paper and glanced at the contents. Her heart stood still within her in horror as she read: 'Patient convalescent and quite sensible, though very weak. He gives his name as Sir Austen Linnell, and has come direct through the Soudan from Khartoum. His cousin also escaped from the massacre, and accompanied him on his retreat as far as the desert, but was shot through the heart by Arabs near Ouargla some ten days since, and died without pain. Break the news gently to Miss Dumaresq.—VANRENNEN.'

So it was all over! The refugee was the wrong one!

She hurried back, panting, but restraining her tears with a terrible effort, for Psyche's sake, and handed the paper without one word of note or comment to Dumaresq. The gray old philosopher read doom in her face, but spoke not a syllable, lest the shock should come too suddenly upon Psyche. He took the telegram from her hands and read it through in silence. Psyche gazed up at him with appealing inquiry from those sightless orbs of hers. 'What does it say, Papa?' she murmured, gasping.

Dumaresq pressed her hand in his. His eyes were full. His voice was too choked for distinct utterance. 'My darling,' he whispered in a very low tone, 'try to bear up. For my sake, Psyche, don't let it kill you.'

Psyche glanced over his shoulder anxiously at the paper. Her eyes, too, were flooded with rising tears. She brushed them away and tried hard to spell it out. But it was too late now. No effort of will could bring back sight any more to those blinded pupils. Not even her eager desire to know the whole truth—to end this suspense, to face the worst—enabled her to break through that thick black cloud that obscured her vision. The world of form and colour was gone, gone utterly. She could see not even in dim outline. Nothing but darkness rose up before her.

'I can't make it out,' she murmured, grasping her father's arm hard. 'Read it to me, Papa. I can bear it. I can bear it.'

Dumaresq's voice faltered terribly. 'I can't read it,' he cried in turn, breaking down in the effort.—'Read it to her, Sirena. I've no voice left. The worst will be better than this suspense she's been living in.'

Sirena read on as far as the words, 'Sir Austen Linnell;' then Psyche's breath came and went suddenly, and she clenched her hands hard to keep herself from fainting.

'And *Him*?' she said slowly, holding up with an effort. 'Does your brother know anything about *him*, Sirena?' And those dim eyes fell upon her faithful new friend with unspeakable pathos.

Sirena hesitated a second in doubt. Then, in a voice half broken by irrepressible sobs, she went on once more till she came to the words, 'died without pain! the Arabs at Ouargla!'

Psyche drew a deep breath again, and sighed once. Strange to say, she seemed more composed now at the last moment than either of the others. Surely the bitterness of death was past. Compared to her worst fears—her worst dreams of unspeakable Oriental torture—that 'died without pain' was almost comfort.

'I know when he died,' Psyche murmured low after a short pause: 'I had a presentiment. That day when I saw him lying dead by himself on the sands in the desert!'

Her unnatural composure terrified Dumaresq. Such deadly calm at such an awful moment could bode no good. He peered down into her eyes, those deep, clear eyes of hers, and saw they were now tearless as well as sightless. 'Cry, darling, cry!' he exclaimed in his terror, clasping her to his bosom in an access of wild despair. 'Cry, Psyche, for my sake, try to cry! If you don't, your grief will surely kill you.'

'I can't, Papa,' Psyche answered quietly, as pale as death, but horribly calm and immovable. 'I cried so much at Petherton—in the nights—alone—when nobody knew I was crying at all—that I taught myself how to cry, internally, somehow. And now, when I'd like to let the tears come most, I feel I can't. They won't break through. My eyes are so hard—like iron balls. There's no cry left in them.'

The old man seated her gently on the rocks once more. Those great blind eyes of hers gazed blankly and despairingly over the dark, dark world that stretched in front of her. She had nothing left to live for in it all now. She sat bolt upright, immovable as stone. Her heart stood still like a stone within her. She said nothing, she saw nothing, she thought of nothing. A great numbness seemed to steal over her senses. She wasn't even unhappy in any active sense. She was conscious only in a dreary, weary, half dead-alive way of a vast calm blank spread for ever before her.

She was sinking, in fact, into utter lethargy. Long grief and despair had driven her senseless.

They sat there long, those two others, watching her anxiously. Many times Sirena looked across with a mute inquiring look in her eyes towards Haviland Dumaresq; and each time the gray old philosopher, heart-broken himself and torn with remorse, framed his lips into a mute *no* when Sirena would have spoken to his heart-broken daughter. It was better to let this dazed and paralysed mood wear itself out to its natural term by pure inanition. Psyche had so discounted her grief already that the final announcement came, not as a sudden shock, but merely as a clear and fatal certainty where before there had been nothing but doubt and hesitation.

At last, with a sudden return of power, she rose from her seat on the great rock, and moved towards the house, neither seeing nor yet groping, but finding her way, as it seemed, by pure instinct. Her tread was firm and her voice steady. 'Say nothing of all this at the villa, Sirena,' she said calmly, turning round, as she reached the road. 'I can bear it all now. I feel stronger already. He died without pain, Sir Austen says. And it's something at least to know exactly what happened to him.'

Sirena walked on by her side and wondered. But in truth Psyche had no reason to weep. A strange yet natural strength seemed to buoy her up. It was the strength of despair, backed up and reinforced by the strength of duty. Her own life was cut off from her altogether now. She had nothing left to live for henceforth but her father. When *he* was gone, she might fade away as she would, like a withered flower.

#### A NEW DEPARTURE IN PROFIT-SHARING.

By far the most striking and original method of solving the social problem, the relation between master and workmen, in force at present, is that founded and carried out by Mr Alfred Dolge, proprietor of lumber-mills, and the largest piano-felt and felt-shoe manufacturer in America, at his factories in Dolgeville, New York State. The sleepy village of Brockett's Bridge has been transformed mainly by his capacity and business energy into a busy hive of industry, and has assumed the name of its benefactor. It is interesting in another sense as the scene of a social experiment which has proved successful so far as it has gone, and which its founder terms *Earnings-sharing*, as distinguished from what is generally called '*Profit-sharing*,' in which Mr Alfred Dolge is no believer. The Emperor of Germany recently expressed his high appreciation of this attempt to solve the labour problem.

Edme-Jean Leclair, the Parisian painter and decorator, is the father of modern profit-sharing; but the past few years have witnessed other no less hopeful and interesting developments. Since 1843, when Leclair astonished his sceptical workmen as to his intentions by throwing a bag of coin (four hundred and ninety pounds) on a table for distribution amongst forty-four of them, developments of his system have spread. In 1891, about fifty British firms, eighty-one in France, Alsace, and Switzerland, and twenty-nine in the United States of America, practised some system of profit-sharing. A usual agreement in the case of British firms adopting the system is, that the surplus profits of the business (if any), beyond such definite sum as is for the time being reserved to the firm for their own benefit, are divided into two equal parts: one part is distributed (not of legal right, but gratuitously) as a bonus to the employees in the manner adopted in the rules of the firm; and the other part is retained by the firm. This does not entitle to any voice in the management, and its weak point is that drones and working-bees have share and share alike. The plan we here describe seems fairer, in so far that it is based on the



workman's own earnings; and in the case of the firm adopting it, strikes and labour troubles are unknown.

None of the pioneers of profit-sharing have ever posed as philanthropists; they have simply acted as business men anxious to improve the prosperity of their different establishments by turning out good work, promoting greater care of implements and economy of material, and welding in closer relationship master and workman. Leclaire on being styled a philanthropist, said: 'I am simply a business man. I would rather gain one hundred thousand francs and give away fifty thousand, than gain twenty-five thousand and keep the whole for myself.' Mr Alfred Dolge, whose system we describe, at his annual reunion at the close of last year repeated what he had told his workmen over and over again, that his plan of distribution of earnings was not an act of benevolence, but simply a matter of business on his part. He had always aimed at producing the best quality of goods that could be made. He knew that he could not do so unless he interested his employees in their work, so that they might use their best endeavours, and tax their brains to improve its quality and lessen the cost of his products. Justice dictated that demanding this from his workmen, he owed them the compensation of more than ordinary wages.

A brief outline of the more prominent methods of profit-sharing will enable us to compare them with that of Mr Dolge. Leclaire found that a mutual aid society which he had established in 1838 became 'a powerful means of moralisation and a living course in public law.' M. Frégier in 1835 had dropped the hint to him that the best expedient to adopt in doing away with the antagonism between capital and labour was to allow the workmen some participation in profits. Neither Leclaire nor the author of this suggestion took the matter seriously at first, until the house-painter, after much thought, concluded in 1842 that the thing appeared to him possible and one of the simplest to put into practice. As now constituted, the net profits of the firm are divided in certain fixed proportions between the managing partners, mutual aid society and the regular workmen. Five per cent. on the capital of four hundred thousand francs is deducted like wages from the gross profits in order to find the net profits; fifty per cent. of the remaining profits go to labour in cash, twenty-five per cent. to management, and twenty-five per cent. to the great provident society, which is now half owner of the capital of the firm. Between 1842, and 1872 the year of Leclaire's death, the mutual aid society and his workmen had received forty-four thousand pounds; in 1882 the sum had reached one hundred and thirty-three thousand pounds. In 1882 and 1889 the dividend that was paid to wages was over nine thousand pounds in each case. The effect on the workmen has been to help to make them sober, thrifty, and industrious.

Other notable profit-sharing concerns are the Co-operative Paper Works, Angoulême, founded by M. E. Laroche-Joubert, where the dividend is paid in cash; and between 1879-88, more than forty-four thousand pounds was so distributed over and above wages. At Godin's iron foundry, Guise, employing sixteen hundred hands, the

workmen's share of profits accumulates towards the purchase of shares in the firm. Profit-sharing in some form has been in force here since 1877, and began with a bonus. Nearly one thousand workmen received additions to wages in 1889. The result is that out of a 'squalid, ignorant peasantry he has produced an industrial community with the discipline of a regiment and the commercial alertness of the market-place.'

The celebrated scheme of Messrs Briggs, Whitwood Colliery, Yorkshire, lasted from 1864 to 1875, until the participation of the workmen in a strike caused its collapse. When the net profits exceeded ten per cent. on the capital embarked, all those employed by the company, managers, agents, or workpeople, received one-half of this excess profit, in proportion to their respective earnings. About thirty-four thousand pounds were so distributed in nine years. We have not space to mention here the names and methods of the fifty British profit-sharing firms. These will be found in Gilman's *Profit-sharing*, and in the description of the Profit-sharing Scheme by Bushill, Coventry.

It is worth noting that at Shanghai, where few of the local native banks have a capital of more than ten to fifteen thousand pounds, every employee down to the lowest coolie has a share in the annual division of profits.

Mr Alfred Dolge, after a study of all the known systems of profit-sharing, came to the conclusion that the one he has adopted is the only practicable one for the amelioration of the condition of working-people. It is not Profit-sharing, but Earnings-sharing; and he says it does not in the least resemble communism or socialism, or the scheme of paternal government now in practice in Germany. It depends entirely on the development of each employee's individuality, and places him on the same level with his employer. So-called profit-sharing, as generally practised, he considers as simply the division of a certain share of the earnings, not of the profits of the business. He objects to the lazy and incompetent workman receiving the same percentage as the intelligent and industrious one, as it appears to him to destroy all individual ambition, and is a kind of alms-giving. Besides, if the profits of a business are to be shared by employees, then it follows that they also share the losses.

Alfred Dolge was born at Chemnitz, Saxony, in 1848, and learned his father's business of piano-making. He went to New York in order to perfect his knowledge of piano construction, returning to Leipzig in 1868. His visit to America determined him to settle there. When Dolge came back to New York, he found work in a piano establishment, and soon noticed that the quality of the hammer leather was very poor. He knew that a much better leather was to be had in Germany, and so he ordered a small quantity by way of experiment. His first venture was so successful that it was soon repeated, and he made a handsome profit by the sale of his skins to piano-makers. He induced his employer, Mathushek, also to import Poehlmann's wire, which was found more suitable for upright pianos. A reduction of wages at the factory in New Haven, in 1869, made him quit the bench and start as an importer of piano materials. He succeeded in placing the materials of the German manufac-

turers on the American market in spite of strong competition. There was one article used in the manufacture of pianos, hammer-felt, which he had not in stock; it had to be imported from Europe; and there were only two makers of it. Dolge determined to begin its manufacture in America and organised the Eagle Felt Company. He had many difficulties to contend with ere he produced good felt for the piano-manufacturers, and lost a considerable amount of money. The excellence of Dolge's manufacture, however, was recognised at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873; and next year the demand had so increased that he had to enlarge his factories at Brockett's Bridge, the village, about two hundred miles from New York, which is now, after himself, called Dolgeville. The village is on the verge of the Adirondacks, has a population of two thousand five hundred, between six and seven hundred of whom find employment in Dolge's factories. The increased demand for organ and piano felt continued not only in America but in Europe, and sawmills and lumber-factories for the making of sounding-boards were added. The felt-shoe industry was also begun, and now fifteen hundred pairs of shoes are made every day in Dolgeville. A business of over three hundred thousand pounds was done in 1890. His own success is reflected amongst his workpeople; and in Dolgeville, which he has largely built up, he has opened roads, introduced the electric light, and contributed most of the funds for an excellent school-house, towards which he subscribes five thousand dollars annually. He has also given a park of four hundred acres to the workpeople, assisted them in building houses, founded a club-house, where good entertainments are given, and a free library.

The result of Alfred Dolge's practical experience, and study of political economy, is comprised in his earnings-sharing scheme. In the creation of wealth he claims that certain of the employees contribute a larger share than is represented by their wages, which are regulated by market-rates; and that these earnings can be determined by a method of book-keeping; and that it is the duty of the employer, as a simple matter of justice, to pay such employees their real earnings, and not merely their wages; and that by so doing he will prevent strikes, produce better results, and in the end profit personally thereby. Alfred Dolge formulated his scheme by the help of the best legal advice. It embraces: (1) A Pension Scheme; (2) an Insurance Scheme; and (3) an Endowment Scheme. This differs from many forms of profit-sharing in that there are no cash payments. The following came into force on January 1st 1890, after several years' experimenting with a Pension (1882) and Life Insurance plan (1886).

Under the Pension Scheme, every employee over twenty-one, and under fifty years of age, after a continuous service of ten years, in case of inability to work through any cause, is entitled to a pension at the rate of fifty per cent. of wages earned during the last year next preceding that of stoppage of work; this rises by gradations to one hundred per cent. after twenty-five years' service. This pension is paid from a fund contributed to by the firm, on account of every employee, according to age and wages earned. The pension fund will soon be self-supporting,

and showed a balance in hand last January of thirteen thousand dollars. Nearly three thousand dollars was paid by the firm to the pension account in the previous year.

Under the Insurance Scheme, every male employee after twenty-one, for each five years of continuous service, is entitled to a Life Insurance Policy of the value of one thousand dollars; so that, after fifteen years' service, he is possessor of three policies worth three thousand dollars. Seventy-five policies of a value of one hundred and thirty-eight thousand dollars were in existence in January last, and the premiums paid by the firm during 1890 amounted to over five thousand dollars.

Under the Endowment Scheme, every male employee who has been in the service of the house for five years is entitled to an endowment account, upon which he will be credited at the end of each year according as the manufacturing record shows that he has earned more than has been paid to him in the form of wages. Any losses caused through bad work are charged against his account. This endowment money is payable only at his arriving at the age of sixty, or at death. Interest upon any balance is credited at the rate of six per cent. at the end of each year. Since this system of earnings-sharing began a few years ago, Mr Dolge has paid to assistants, foremen, clerks, and working-men, and for their benefit, over one hundred thousand dollars. None of these laws, of course, deprive the house of the power to discharge a workman for any good reason, or alter the right of the workman to quit at any time. A neat passbook is put in the hands of each workman containing the printed laws of this system of distribution of earnings, with blank columns in which the share falling due can be entered.

The wise and practical advice given to his workmen at the annual reunions is always good. Mr Dolge told his workmen once, if they wished to increase their earnings, to live better and enjoy more comforts, they must cultivate their minds, use their brains, and develop their intelligence to such a point that they might use their mental and physical powers to the best advantage; for that, after all, was the only advantage that he or any other employer had in the race of life over his employees. Brains more than the exertion of muscular force had built their imposing factories, developed the felt business and the elegant styles of the shoes produced. Brain-work was better paid because it produced higher and wider results than manual or merely physical labour.

## A NOBLE REVENGE.

### PART III.—A FRIEND IN NEED.

THE entrance to Providence Court, Bucklersbury, is so narrow, being an arched passage, that it can easily be passed unnoticed. This passage running through a house to the rear opens on a small paved yard. Gloomy even in summer, overshadowed by tall buildings on all sides, it is chiefly occupied by the offices of various agents. At the farther end, in the darkest corner, a small house of two stories was occupied by Mr Issachar, the usurer and money-lender. He resided there all the year round, never taking

a holiday, having given up all recreation years ago, when he buried his Christian wife, for whose sake he had been cast out from his people. His only diversion was money-making, not on account of the luxury it purchases, but as an amusing game of speculation. He had no children to inherit it. His affections had withered up, for he was alone in the world. In leading a meditative life, his intellect had become clearer than ever. His advice was sought in many a pecuniary speculation. Those who took it generally prospered.

One fine morning Mr Issachar sat at a desk close to the wire-blind at the window of his dark office, upon which the sun never shone. Though a hot day on the outer side of the passage, it was chilly in the court, and Mr Issachar had a fire. He was engaged in taking extracts from financial papers. A small spare man, with hair and beard white as snow, wearing a velvet cap and gold spectacles. His complexion was of the clearest olive; his forehead high, crossed and recrossed by countless lines, delicate as cobwebs; a fine brow, under which his Oriental, long, and even beautiful brown eyes still retained their lustre.

Presently footsteps broke upon the silence of the court. Mr Issachar raised his head, listening. They advanced towards his house. 'The trained walk of a gentleman.' Long practice had enabled the Jew to judge of a person's position by the tread. 'Military, I think,' said he.

The regular tramp, tramp of the footfalls stopped at his door, and there was a rap from the highly polished brass knocker, which had been screwed on when the house was rebuilt immediately after the Fire of London.

The door was opened by a young clerk, a German Jew, for Issachar clung to his ancient race. 'A gentleman wishes to see you, sir; he will not send in his name.'

'I will receive him.' Mystery surrounded so many of his clients, that this was nothing unusual.

The visitor was a tall well-made man, with a sunburnt face, and hair prematurely gray. Removing his hat as he entered the room, he stood for a moment regarding the money-lender without speaking, who on his side looked up at him with a questioning expression on his face.

'We have met before, Mr Issachar. Am I changed past recognition?'

The Jew fastened his intelligent eyes upon him, scanning every feature; then he said slowly: 'You are indeed altered; yet I know you by your figure, your eyes, your voice: they are the same as of old. To change like this in so short a time denotes mental suffering. You have been through a fiery furnace, Captain Gravenor.'

'So short a time! Why, it is eleven long years,' cried his visitor with a bitter laugh.

'To me it appears short because my life is monotonous. Many events, change of scene, cause time to seem longer. As you left me, so you find me. I have often thought of you—felt for your blighted life.'

'You believed in me—that is why I come to-day.'

'I never doubted your innocence. How long have you been back? Tell me your story.'

'But a few weeks. As for my story there is not much to tell. I was not badly treated on the whole—out there. I tried to become resigned

and found comfort by going back to the early lessons of a pious mother. Had she lived, I might have been a less thoughtless man.' He sighed. 'Well, I got a good name in several respects. When the time came for freedom, I went to Melbourne, and lived for eighteen months by my own exertions. I set up as an accountant and prospered better than I expected. But a desperate yearning for home possessed me. I returned—to learn that I had a son.' He buried his face in his hands. There was a silence.

'I, too, once had a son—he died. You are better off than I am. Yours lives.'

'He is ignorant that he has a father. They have even discarded my name. I have seen him. A noble boy, with his mother's beauty. Then I felt a wicked thirst for revenge spring up within me against the villain who has debarred me from the happiness of his infancy—of witnessing him budding into boyhood.'

'Never doubt but there is a hand that will repay. The treacherous only prosper for a time. —Can you fix upon your enemy?'

'Yes. But I have no proof.'

'There are strange mysterious agencies at work around us—hidden influences, which we human beings cannot fathom. How is it you walk into this room when I was just about to advertise for you?'

'For me?'

'Yes; for I knew the time had expired for your release. Lift that marble letter-weight on the table before you; read the strip of paper under it.'

Captain Gravenor obeyed. 'Captain George Gravenor, formerly of the — Regiment, is requested to communicate with Messrs Everett, Solicitors, Bedford Row.—Colonial papers, please copy.'

He let the paper fall from his hand. 'How wonderful—how extraordinary!' he cried.

'Listen!' said Issachar.

Captain Gravenor sat down quite overcome. Here was a friend—at last, at last—one who believed in him.

'Living here apart from the world,' commenced the Jew, 'it interests me to follow the career of many persons who pass as in a phantasmagoria across life's stage. A brilliant entrance—an exit to be soon forgotten. Monarchs have lived and died; dynasties have passed away; new countries risen. Statesmen made great names, now forgotten. Genius has flashed like a meteor for a time, and soon died. Three generations of names are contained in those safes,' and he indicated the rows of them around the office. 'All since I have sat at this table, in the same chair, with the same velvet cover, not yet worn out. There are many persons whose actions I have followed, and still follow, noting their lives. I piece the fragments together as a child does a puzzle. I think I know the hand that worked your ruin, and say, Wait.'

'I must and will clear my name,' cried Captain Gravenor with energy. 'Can you help me to do so?'

'You must remain in London.—How do you propose living?'

'The very subject on which I came to speak. Can you—will you, recommend me as an accountant?'

'Yes; I believe I can do that.—How do your finances stand?' asked Issachar confidentially. 'Can I lend you money?'

'Thank you for a kind offer, Mr Issachar. With my frugal habits I have sufficient for the present. Should it fail, I will come to you.'

'Agreed,' said the Jew. 'Wait. When affairs are ripe, you shall act. I was about to advertise for you, that you might be at hand when a certain event will assuredly come to pass, or I am much mistaken. It will clear your name from all blemish.'

'Do that, Mr Issachar, and I will kneel to you,' replied the Captain in a subdued voice, 'much overcome.'

'No,' said the old man. 'I am only a poor human being, a descendant of a despised race. Perhaps in your case I may be an instrument in the hands of Providence.'

Very soon after this interview, Captain Gravenor, under an assumed name, set up as an accountant in a room near Broad Street, where he found employment, thanks to the recommendations of Issachar. He remained unknown and unrecognised, walking the London streets like a ghost returned to his former haunts, with a strange feeling that George Gravenor was another person from himself altogether. On Saturdays, his one great but melancholy pleasure was to take a return ticket to the seaside place where Felix was at school and watch the boy at play. Sometimes he had a sight of Lena, but this was seldom, as she was her father's companion during his convalescence, reading and writing for him untiringly. Neither she nor her boy knew whose eyes were upon them. Felix imagined his father to be dead. Young as he was, it seemed strange, he thought, that no one ever spoke of him; from an early age he had been checked when he ventured a question.

'I should like to have a photograph of my Papa,' he said one day to his mother. 'The other boys at school have them whether they are alive or dead.'

A look of positive fright passed over Lena's face, and she burst into tears. 'Never ask me that again, Felix,' she sobbed.

Once he ventured, also saying to Mr Desborough: 'Did my Papa go to Eton when he was a boy?'

'I do not know.'

'I wish he hadn't died.'

'You must look upon me as grandfather and father as well, Felix. Do not speak of him again.'

Youth is thoughtless. The boy had a vague impression of mystery—that was all. He never renewed the subject.

It was seven months since Mr Desborough had visited Nicholas Lane; he could walk pretty well now, and was anxious to resume his old habits. Mr Thorel had taken his place efficiently in the interim. He reported affairs at the bank to be perfectly satisfactory, and Mr Desborough's presence to be quite unnecessary.

One morning Mr Thorel drove across the Park from his house in Kensington Gore to Portland Place. Dressed in the height of fashion, with an exotic in his button-hole, he entered Mr Desborough's library, where Lena sat reading the *Times* to her father.

'I have come for the key of the strong-room,'

said he. 'Lord Harbury is coming this morning to Nicholas Lane for his jewels; his son is going to be married.'

'I will go with you,' said the banker. 'I shall be glad of an incentive to renew my duties.'

'But are you equal to it? Do you think if'—

'Quite, and I shall go,' said Mr Desborough. Rising, he opened his desk, taking out the master-key of the iron room at the bank, where plate, jewels, and securities were deposited—a key never out of his possession until his illness obliged him to intrust it to Mr Thorel in the course of business; but it was returned to him immediately.

His unexpected arrival at the bank was received with many congratulations from his numerous staff; and the old gentleman resumed his chair in the private room with unalloyed pleasure, awaiting the visit of Lord Harbury, who arrived at twelve o'clock.

Mr Desborough unlocked the strong-room door, then the iron safe containing Lord Harbury's family jewels, which were in an ebony casket. The nobleman pulled out its tiers of drawers to examine them. He held up a beautiful diamond necklace with a large opal pendant. 'This opal is considered the heirloom of my family; it is one of the finest in Europe. My future daughter-in-law will wear it on her bridal day.' At this moment one of the small diamonds surrounding it fell from the setting on to the table. 'Now, how does that come about?' said he. Adjusting his glasses, he closely inspected the jewel. 'The setting is damaged. How strange! Why—no—yes—impossible!' He looked up blankly at the banker.

'What is wrong? What is wrong?' cried Mr Desborough anxiously.

'Are you a judge of precious stones? If so, tell me if you call this an iridescent opal? There are greens and red in it, but no real fire. Mr Desborough, my opal has been changed!'

'My lord, that is impossible.'

'Take care what you assert, Lord Harbury,' said Mr Thorel in a menacing tone, a dark frown upon his face.

'How dare you dictate to me what I should say?' cried the nobleman in sudden anger. 'I swear that this is not an opal at all, nor even a first-rate imitation.—Desborough, how do you account for this?'

'The opal is as you brought it,' again interrupted Mr Thorel.

'I am bewildered,' exclaimed the banker.

'It is *not* as I brought it; this is a false one.'

'Then it was changed before you deposited it with us. Such things do happen in aristocratic families,' remarked Mr Thorel insolently.

'Not in mine, sir,' replied the nobleman haughtily. 'Besides, I took the precaution of having the jewels examined by Hancock on my way here—seven years ago, when Lady Harbury died. We will go to him now, if you please.'

The result was as Lord Harbury had detected: the opal had been stolen. This was a valueless counterfeit.

Poor Mr Desborough was much agitated. Once made public, this affair would damage his credit, and ruin him. 'We must go to Scotland Yard,' gasped he faintly.



'You are not fit, uncle; I will go,' cried Mr Thorel. 'We will sift it to the bottom.'

'Let me take you home,' said Lord Harbury kindly. 'I am very sorry to cause you anxiety, and you only just recovering from an illness.'

'I do not value my life, my lord, but I do my honour. Who can have done this?' He was much shaken.

When he sat down in his study to think, after recovering from the first shock of the discovery, his energy returned to him in a remarkable manner; always a clear-headed man, he took a sudden resolution. He wired for a celebrated detective to come at once. The result of their conference was a strong suspicion of one person.

'You must come with me to the bank immediately,' said the old gentleman. 'I cannot rest until the contents of the strong-room are thoroughly examined.'

### FIRST NIGHTS OF FAMOUS PLAYS.

THE mental condition of every one assisting at the production of a new drama—audience, actors, or playwright—must always prove an interesting study. In the good old times, when the gallery was crowded with 'prentices from Cheapside, the boxes with 'persons of quality,' and the pit with celebrated wits, most plays were either 'troubled with convulsive fits, or died the first night,' says the author of the *Stage Beaux*—Tom Brown of Shiffnal—'or by mere dint of acting, held out to the third; which is like a consumptive man's living by cordials, or else die a violent death, and are interred with the solemnity of cat-calls.'

In glancing back into the early part of the last century an advertisement will be found, published in the *Daily Courant*, announcing that Addison's new tragedy of *Cato* would be presented 'at the Theatre-royal, Drury Lane, on Tuesday, the 14th of April.' This was in 1713. The four first acts of the play, written nine years before, had been submitted to Colley Cibber, actor, author, and joint-manager of Drury Lane Theatre. Cibber's pleasure on reading the manuscript is reported to have been unbounded. But the manager's delight was nipped in the bud. 'Whatever spirit Mr Addison had shown in writing it, he doubted he would never have courage enough to let his *Cato* stand the censure of an English audience: that it had only been written for the amusement of his leisure hours in Italy, and was never intended for the stage.' But it was now an open secret that he had framed a tragedy; and having been lately introduced to Pope—probably at Button's or the Kit Cat Club—Addison brought *Cato* with him in order to have his sincere opinion about it. 'I told him,' says Pope, 'that I thought that he had better not act it: that he would get reputation enough by only printing it. This I said as thinking the lines well written, but the piece not theatrical enough.' But the time came 'when those who affected to think liberty a danger, affected likewise to think that a stage-play might preserve it.' The forcible utterances touching liberty which this tragedy contained, it was thought, must rouse the people to a sense of the danger they suffered from the evil machinations of the Tories. The play was speedily

prepared for representation. For years no social event had excited more interest in society. Political circles looked forward to its effects with intense anxiety. A prologue was written by Pope, and a humorous epilogue by Dr Garth. The eventful evening arrived: the theatre presented an appearance of exceptional brilliancy—critics, poets, and playwrights: men of every political creed were in the pit. The boxes were filled: stars in the breasts of peers and diamonds on the necks of ladies dazzled the eye. The play began; and in the excitement all criticism was forgotten. Cato's first speech in defence of freedom—

'Twill never be too late  
To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.  
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time?  
No; let us draw her term of freedom out  
In its full length, and spin it to the last;  
So shall we gain still one day's liberty:  
And let me perish, but in Cato's judgment,  
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty  
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage—

was greeted with loud applause from the Whig party on one side of the house, and echoed by plaudits not less boisterous from Tories on the other; for the Tories had resolved to turn the tables on their opponents by a warm recognition of all that was uttered in favour of liberty. Throughout the five acts the applause never lagged. 'Yet not until the last sentence was spoken, and the curtain fairly dropped,' says Mrs Inchbald, 'did the author even venture to move.' Addison had placed himself on a bench in the greenroom, 'his body motionless, his soul in tumult, keeping by his side a friend, whom he despatched every minute towards the stage to bring him news of what was passing there.' The tragedy was acted for thirty nights. But it was never considered a good stage-play: its run was chiefly due to the political points of view from which it was regarded.

It was early in the year 1772, when Goldsmith was forty-four years of age, that he fell in with a friend at some old Fleet Street tavern, and begged his honest opinion as to the merits of the plot which he had conceived for a new comedy. The motive of the play, it was understood, turned upon 'one gentleman mistaking the house of another for an inn.' The critic pronounced the device too broad and farcical for comedy: upon hearing which Goldsmith exclaimed: 'It is all I can do; for alas, I find that my genius, if I ever had any, has of late totally deserted me!' In order that he might be freer from interruption while engaged in writing this comedy, the author took lodgings in a farmhouse close to the village of Hyde, six miles from London. When he returned to town, Goldsmith submitted his play to George Colman; but tedious weeks and months went by and no satisfactory answer came. The spring passed and brought him no hope. At last, early in the following year, he wrote Colman a pathetic letter. In answer to this appeal his manuscript was returned: it was accompanied, however, by a note stating that notwithstanding its faults the play would be produced. But no name had yet been given to the comedy. Joshua Reynolds suggested 'The Belle's Stratagem'—afterwards used by Mrs Cowley for one of her comedies; another friend

considered 'The Old House a New Inn' more suitable. But the author finally selected *She Stoops to Conquer*; or, *the Mistakes of a Night*, as the most appropriate title. Garrick wrote a prologue for the play; and the 15th of March 1773—the date fixed for the first representation of this noted comedy—at last arrived. Goldsmith's friends, resolving to celebrate the day as became its importance, agreed to dine in company before visiting the playhouse. The poor dramatist was exceedingly nervous; neither the friendly sallies of Dr Johnson, encouraging words from Reynolds, nor the epigrams of Edmund Burke, could divert his thoughts. Dinner over, Goldsmith declined to accompany his friends: he resolved to absent himself from the theatre until the fate of the comedy was known. Meanwhile, the playhouse was filled by an expectant audience. At six o'clock the curtain rose, the prologue was spoken, and the play began. The house, quickly catching the humour of the scenes and the wit of the dialogue, warmed into hearty laughter. After the second act no doubt existed of the comedy's success. All eyes were turned upon Dr Johnson; 'and when he laughed, every body thought himself entitled to roar.' In fact, Tony Lumpkin's antics and Marlow's mistakes kept the house in excellent humour. All this while Goldsmith was wandering about moodily in St James's Park. Here a friend met him, and at last prevailed upon him to visit the theatre. The success of this comedy was doubly assured at the time from being witnessed on the tenth night of its production by George III.

When the newspapers announced the date fixed for the *School for Scandal*—'a play never before performed'—they made no mention of the author's name: the advertisements declared that the comedy 'would be ornamented with scenes which did honour to the painters, and furnished with dresses new and elegant.' In those days new dresses were the exception rather than the rule. The evening of the 8th of May 1777 was the date fixed for the first performance. The doors of Drury Lane playhouse opened at half-past five o'clock, and before an hour passed, 'a brilliant and crowded audience,' says the *Public Advertiser*, 'had assembled.' The curtain rising in due time, Garrick's prologue was given with much pleasantry. It adverted to the title of the comedy, and 'shot an arrow of pointed satire at the too general proneness to detraction observable in the daily and evening papers.' Then the comedy began. 'The loudest testimonies of applause,' remarked the *London Evening Post* on the day following, 'greeted the comedy between every act.' But the full force of enthusiasm was reserved for the screen scene, which produced a burst of applause 'beyond anything ever heard in a theatre.' A record of the sensation this scene caused is to be found in the *Life and Times of Frederick Reynolds* the dramatist. On this very night he was returning from Lincoln's Inn about nine o'clock; 'and passing through the pit passage from Vinegar Yard to Brydges Street,' he writes: 'I heard such a tremendous noise over my head that, fearing the theatre was proceeding to fall about it, I ran for my life; but found the next morning that the noise did not arise from the falling of the house, but from the falling of the screen in the fourth act, so violent and so tumultu-

ous were the applause and laughter.' Sheridan had gained the reputation that night of having written the most brilliant comedy in our language.

'What think you of a Newgate pastoral amongst the thieves?' Swift once remarked in Gay's presence. Gay was inclined to think a comedy having scenes laid in the famous prison might be better still. When he mentioned his idea to Swift, the doctor did not much like the project; and when the play was written, neither Swift nor Pope thought it would succeed. It was offered to Colley Cibber and his brother-managers at Drury Lane, and was promptly rejected. Gay then took it to John Rich, proprietor of Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre. Rich accepted the play, and it was speedily put in rehearsal. The following announcement was printed in the *Daily Post* on the 29th of January 1728: 'Never before acted by the company of comedians at the Theatre-royal in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The present Monday, being the 29th day of January, will be performed the *Beggar's Opera*.' On the night of its first representation, Gay's many friends assembled at the old playhouse in the Fields. A vast crowd of 'women of quality and men of parts' was present. A ballad opera was a form of entertainment new to the public, and its success was assured before the curtain fell. The acclamations which rang through the house were said to have been deafening. For sixty-three consecutive nights the *Beggar's Opera* was performed that season. Nor was that all. It drove the Italian opera, which it burlesqued, out of town. Its songs were sung in every drawing-room, its verses printed on the fans of ladies of quality. In the character of the heroine, Polly Peachum, Miss Fenton gained both fame and fortune.

Edmund Kean's appearance shortly before his death in Grattan's play of *Ben Nazir* was one of the most anxious first nights ever witnessed. The incident has been placed on record in graphic style by the author himself. 'The night at length arrived,' writes Grattan. 'Everything was ready. I saw Kean in the morning; he expressed himself with the utmost confidence; strutted about his drawing-room in his lodgings in Duke Street, Adelphi, decked out in his magnificent dress; and declaimed with great vigour some of his favourite passages—the book in his hand. Notwithstanding all this, I had serious doubts of the night's result. I was certain he would be imperfect; but I reckoned fully on his giving the principal passages with ample effect; and I calculated on subsequent representations repairing any defects which might appear on the first.' Grattan then repaired to the theatre. He knew that Kean felt deeply the importance of ensuring success in *Ben Nazir*. He knew that a crisis had arrived in his professional fate. The whole tide of public feeling was with him. He had regained his place at the head of the acted drama. To confirm him there, beyond competition or cavi, there was only wanting one vigorous display of power in a new part, and that part was now ready written to his hand. Nothing, in short, could have exceeded the ardour with which he had undertaken the study of this play. He had carried it away with him on the provincial tour on which he had set out after playing his dozen nights in London to enthusiastic

audiences. He had repeatedly said that he hoped to reap as much fame from it as he had gained from Maturin's *Bertram*. The dress in which he was to appear was magnificent; an idea may be formed on that head from the fact that it cost fifty guineas. Kean reckoned on playing *Ben Nazir* a hundred nights. The house was crowded in all parts when Grattan took his seat in a private box behind the dress circle. A fair share of applause was given to some of the early passages; and the audience seemed well prepared for Kean's appearance, with which the third scene was to open. He did at length appear. The intention of the author and the keeping of the character required him to rush rapidly on the stage giving utterance to a burst of joyous soliloquy. 'What was my astonishment to see him, as the scene opened,' says Grattan, 'standing in the centre of the stage, his arms crossed, and his whole attitude one of thoughtful solemnity! His dress was splendid; and thunders of applause greeted him from all parts of the house. To display the one and give time for the other were the objects for which he stood fixed for several minutes and sacrificed the sense of the situation. He spoke; but what a speech! The one I wrote consisted of eight or nine lines: his was of two or three sentences, but not six consecutive words of the text. His look, his manner, his tone, were to me quite appalling; to any other observer they must have been incomprehensible. I was utterly shocked. And as the play went on and as he stood by, with moveless muscle and glazed eye, throughout the scene which should have been one of violent, perhaps too violent exertion, a cold shower of perspiration poured from my forehead, and I endured a revulsion of feeling which I cannot describe, and which I would not for worlds one eye had witnessed. The act closed—a dead silence followed the fall of the curtain.' The stage-manager came forward and made an apology for Kean's imperfection in his part and an appeal in behalf of the play. Neither excited much sympathy: the audience was disgusted. 'I now, for the first time during the night, went behind the scenes. On crossing the stage towards the greenroom I met Kean, supported by his servant and another person, going in the direction of his dressing-room. When he saw me he hung down his head and waved his hand and uttered some expressions of deep sorrow and even remorse. I bore my disappointment as well as I could; returned thanks to the other actors for their exertions, and renounced dramatic writing for ever.'

When Sheridan Knowles offered Charles Kemble the *Hunchback* for Covent Garden Theatre, it was immediately accepted. Fanny Kemble, then in her twentieth year, has recorded her first impressions of the comedy. 'After my riding lesson,' she writes, 'I went and sat in the library to hear Sheridan Knowles's play of the *Hunchback*. He read it himself to us. A real play, with real characters, individuals, human beings. It is a good deal after the fashion of our old playwrights, and does not disgrace its models. I was delighted with it; it is full of life and originality; a little long, but that's a trifle. I like the woman's part exceedingly, but am afraid I shall find it very difficult to act.' She was cast for Julia, her representation of which Knowles subsequently acknowledged far out-

stripped his most sanguine hopes. The author enacted the part of Master Walter. The play was produced on the 5th of April 1832. The crowded house which assembled to witness its performance was unanimous in its appreciation; and during the latter scenes, between Julia, Clifford, and Master Walter, 'the audience was overwhelmed with tears.' When the curtain fell, the *Morning Chronicle* states, 'the applause was tumultuous, and a general call made for Knowles. He was confused by the novelty of his situation, and exclaimed that, "conscious of his own unworthiness, he presumed that the audience was applauding their own kindness." The comedy ran to the close of the season, being only interrupted by a few benefit nights.

The famous play, the *Lady of Lyons*, was in rehearsal in the early part of 1833. On the evening of Thursday, February 15, it was announced for representation. Curiosity had been for some time excited regarding the power and brilliancy of this play, and the first representation was therefore attended by an unusually large audience. Men and women of rank and fashion filled the boxes. The curtain rose, and the play began amidst breathless interest. Macready, who took the part of Claude Melnotte, had never acted with greater force and energy; Miss Faucit (now Lady Martin) played with dignity and grace; and before the first act was finished, every one predicted that the drama would prove successful. Curiosity regarding the author was now rife: a thousand surmises were made as to his name. None seemed to recognise the work as Bulwer's. As the play went on the applause increased. Miss Faucit not merely won plaudits; she drew tears from the audience. 'Her first indication of changed feeling,' says the *Morning Chronicle*, 'from agony to rage, at the word *mother* addressed to the widow Melnotte, was an exquisite touch of genuine nature.' Meanwhile, Bulwer was not present to witness the triumph of his production; he was detained in the House of Commons by a debate on the ballot, in which he took part. The curtain had risen on the last act when he entered Lady Blessington's box. The audience was following the play with rapt attention; and finally, as the curtain fell, burst into a tumult of prolonged applause.

## RANKEILOR'S DIAMOND.

BY CARROL KING.

I WAS lying lazily in my hammock, which swung in the cool breeze, hung from a giant limb of one of the great trees in the compound. I was realising, somewhat uncomfortably, the condition of my finances, and forcing myself to look the situation squarely in the face. I was slow to believe that pleasure is a more costly thing than labour, and its products far from being as satisfactory. When I left England, I assured my father that five hundred a year and my pay would be more than enough to cover all reasonable wants and wishes; and now, after nine or ten months in Bareilly, I was so straitened 'for lack o' gear,' that I must either overdraw, borrow, or live an exceedingly retired life for the next three months. The privilege of playing guinea pool, in Ashton's rooms, with much better players than myself,

and the not very heavy book on half-a-dozen sporting events, had combined towards this rapid result, as I could not help ruefully acknowledging.

As I mused, I became suddenly aware of a laughing face looking down into my hammock. Rankeilor, the captain of my company, had swung himself noiselessly into the tree, and perched astride a rough limb that swayed alongside of mine. 'Well, Campbell,' was his gay greeting, 'you are enjoying the *dolce far niente* in the shade. I am just released from duty.'

'You are mistaken about the *dolce*,' I replied. 'I am tasting the bitter, not the "sweet do-nothing," and shall have to taste it for some time to come.'

'I have been a bit remorseful over you, lad,' he said, speaking more gravely than was his wont, and without looking at me, scraping down gray fragments of lichen from the trunk of the old tree. 'I have not forgotten that it was I who first introduced you into Ashton's rooms and to his fast set. I have been foolish enough myself; but I had no right to drag you into a like scrape.'

'Nonsense, Rankeilor!' I said hastily. 'I was just charging myself with moral supineness when you came upon me so suddenly—resolving to pull myself together, and resist even sixpenny Nap in future!'

He smiled his bright sunny smile. 'All right, lad. I'll back you up.—I am afraid I need not say what I came to say—to ask, rather. You could not lend me a tenner for two days?'

I shook my head regretfully. 'I am completely cleaned out, Rankeilor—not a rupee left. And, what is worse, Ashton holds one or two IOUs, which he must hold till next pay.'

'Ashton holds them,' he repeated, a quick impatient frown crossing his features. 'Then you positively have not a single coin to throw at a fellow, Campbell?'

'Not one, Rankeilor. I am awfully sorry; but'—

'Oh, never mind,' he interrupted, with ready kindness. 'I shall have plenty in a day or two, and may be able to give you a lift—who knows?' He reached up to the limb above, to steady himself for an elastic spring downwards.

'Hallo! What's come of your big rose diamond?' I asked, looking at the empty setting of the ring he always wore on the little finger of his left hand.

He, too, looked at the empty ring, and although he laughed, I saw that he had changed colour, and his laugh, to my ear, who knew all his moods, bore an inflection of pain or vexation.

'I—shall have it reset in two days at the furthest,' he answered. 'And I mean to make the setting more secure.' With a nod he sprang down, and vanished.

I wondered idly why he had shown some little confusion or annoyance at my question. The ring was a lady's ring—a large, exceedingly beautiful rose diamond, set between two opals. Of course he was bantered unsparingly about it by his brother-officers, and equally, of course, he retained his bright good-humour, and replied with really wit, making none of them any the wiser regarding the donor of the ring. I alone knew that it was his mother's old engagement

ring, and that she had asked him to 'make it his talisman—his charm against evil.'

'It is time for your rope-drill, sir, and the men are turning out,' said Farrel's voice, breaking in on my thoughts.

I sprang down at once, casting a regretful look at the hammock that I left swinging in the cool shade of green boughs. I hated rope-drill, and the men hated it even more cordially than I did. It was an arrangement of ropes and knots whereby eight or ten men could be made to represent fifty or a hundred—by dint of hard work and much running about. However, the weather was not yet hot enough to make active exercise positively disagreeable; so we went at it with a will just inside the wall of the great compound, in the centre of which stood the officers' bungalow.

After we had finished and I had dismissed the men, who trotted away thankfully, wiping their hot brows, I threw myself down on the ground, hot and panting. Petersen, one of the men, had remained to gather up the ropes and convey them to their place. Suddenly he darted away from the ropes and dashed his cap at some object with all his force.

'What is it?' I asked, raising myself on my elbow with languid curiosity to watch his movements.

'It's a rabbit, sir! He's got into a hole here; but I'll have him for supper yet.' He began pulling away some light shrubs around the mouth of the hole or ditch into which the rabbit had disappeared. I lay down again heedlessly, to lounge away a few of the fifteen minutes that would intervene before the bell sounded for tiffin. Suddenly I heard the man calling me by name.

'Mr Campbell, sir, won't you please come here just for a moment?'

I jumped up, and went to the mouth of the hole, into which man and rabbit had both disappeared. Petersen was emerging from it feet foremost, dragging something after him.

'This is a queer place, sir,' he said: 'it goes in ever so far. It's a regular tunnel, it is; and I found them things inside!'

He held up a trowel and pickaxe—a very small one—both which bore evidence of having been recently used for excavating purposes in the half-dried, freshly-turned earth adhering to them.

'Where do you suppose it leads to?' I asked, taking the trowel in my hand.

'Well, sir, I didn't go in very far; but it goes off that way a good bit.' He described a sweep with his arm, passing the officers' quarters, to the left.

'And that leads?'—Only for an instant did I stand with bent brows; then, as if a 'brain-wave' had flashed from the one to the other, we both exclaimed at once: 'Good gracious! The fort!—the fort, with all the money!'

'It must be that,' I said, in consternation. 'Petersen, you go in again and penetrate to the very end. I shall walk above, as your voice directs.—Mind, you must shout well. We must look into this.'

The man obeyed at once, and crept back into the hole.

As soon as he had completely vanished, I



threw down the trowel, and prepared to follow above-ground, when a single dazzling point of light glittered like a star from amidst the displaced earth fallen from the trowel, where I had thrown it down. With a strange, sinking feeling of genuine dismay at my heart, I stooped, and picked up—Rankelior's diamond! I had not time then, however, to speculate. Petersen was already shouting, his voice muffled and indistinct, as from a distance. I rolled the precious stone in a corner of my handkerchief, and sprang away to follow the man's progress. I replied to every shout by stamping violently on the ground. As we had feared, we were led directly to the 'fort,' where all the moneys of the garrison were packed and stacked from floor to ceiling. What was worse, before the faint muffled voice had ceased to lead me forward, I stood within two or three yards of the back wall of the fort! Evidently the tunnel was quite near completion: a single night's hard work, a brick or two removed from the wall, and the excavators would be richly rewarded!

I turned, and quickly retraced my steps to the mouth of the tunnel. A group of men, among whom I distinguished Captains Ashton and Fordyce, stood by the entrance. Plainly, they had been watching our movements, and must have thought them suspicious.

Obedying a swift impulse, I lifted my handkerchief and slipped the jewel into my mouth, where it lay 'rolled like a sweet morsel under my tongue.' I saw that Captain Fordyce held the trowel in his hand, and Captain Ashton had just laid down the pickaxe.

'Campbell! You, Campbell! It can't be possible?' exclaimed Ashton, in amazed crescendo. 'Who would have thought or believed it! I should sooner have named any other man in the garrison, had I been asked to pick out the—' the delinquent.'

'The delinquent!' I repeated haughtily. 'How dare you use the word to me? I have been discovering a bold and daring attempt to rob the fort—an attempt that has come dangerously near to success too! Another night's work would have finished the—'

'What did I tell you, Fordyce?' interrupted Ashton, shaking his head. 'I told you, when we discovered this tunnel yesterday, and resolved to watch it, that the—the excavators would be sure to wear a bold front, and proclaim themselves explorers only!'

'I will not submit to this!' I cried with intense anger. I never was a patient man, and Ashton's half-compassionate, half-contemptuous tone drove me wild. 'You exceed your authority, Ashton! As for Petersen, he was obeying orders. I am going now straight to Colonel Pryor, to lay the whole infamous business before him. I think you will scarcely dare to say that that is the course of action a guilty man would follow!'

I turned sharply round to do as I said, when the men, coming upon me like an avalanche, seized and overpowered me in a moment, and with either arm in a powerful grip, I realised with speechless anger that quietness would serve my turn best, at least for the present. Both Ashton and Fordyce were my superiors in rank. I was comparatively a new-comer, while

they were veterans in the service. Even if this proved a mistake, their mistaken zeal would do them less harm than good in the colonel's eyes in so serious an affair as this.

'Escort Mr Campbell to his quarters, men,' said Ashton's quiet voice. 'Petersen can be taken to the guardroom for the present.—Fordyce, we had better go at once to Colonel Pryor.'

I was 'escorted' to my quarters by the obedient automatons on either side of me. Once fairly into my rooms, the first use I made of my privacy was to lock away Rankelior's diamond in a secret drawer of my desk; and then, though chafing like an imprisoned eaglet, I forced myself into quietness, in order to think out as best I could what relation Rankelior bore to this strange discovery of the secret tunnel.

I had abundance of time to pursue my reflections, for, with the solitary exception of the orderly who brought my luncheon, no one came near me for several hours. Over and over, round and round again, spun and whirled in my brain the events of the day and my strange discovery. The conclusion I came to was startling; and the instant I found myself being driven towards it, like a horse swerving from a desperate leap, I turned away and began my summary all over again. One or two things I was quite sure of: Rankelior's diamond had sparkled and scintillated on his finger last evening at the late mess dinner. Ashton and Fordyce had both declared that they had watched the tunnel since 'yesterday afternoon'; Rankelior must therefore have lost the jewel in the tunnel while it was being watched, and at night, or very early in the morning. What could that possibly mean except?— I always stopped there, and began all over again. I remember, with a strange feeling of disloyalty to one who had been the kindest of friends to me, how Rankelior had two or three times told me that he would have 'plenty of money' within a day or two at the furthest, and would even be able to help me out of my tight places. One thing I was clearly decided upon, in the slow crystallisation of repulsive ideas forming in my brain against my will—that was, that so far as I was concerned in the matter, I would shield my friend's name. I would preserve utter silence on the subject of his lost diamond, for the present at least, no matter what the penalty might be.

A quick footstep in the corridor caught my ear; my door was thrown open, and Rankelior walked in, his face suffused with a fiery glow of indignation. 'What a thundering shame, Campbell!' was his impulsive salutation, holding out both hands to me. 'If Ashton and Fordyce knew you as I do, they would laugh at the thought of bringing such a charge against you!'

'As you do,' I said, forcing a smile. 'I mean—as you laugh at it!'

He looked at me attentively, as if something in my manner had struck him as unusual.

'Tell me all about it, Campbell,' he said, speaking with authority and kindness, both. 'Let me hear your version of the affair.'

'Mine is very simple. I was at my rope-drill, as the men can testify. I had dismissed the men, all but Petersen, whose duty it was to see to the ropes, when I saw him fling his cap at a rabbit

just darting into its hole, as we thought. Cap and rabbit both disappeared, and Petersen crawled in after, and found—what made him forget the rabbit. We had just finished exploring the tunnel; in fact, I have not yet had Petersen's report. Ashton and Fordyce, with one or two men, seized and arrested us, and scoffed at my explanations.'

Rankeilor looked grave.

'May I hear their account of it?' I asked after a pause.

'Yes. It seems that they discovered this tunnel yesterday, and without exploring it very thoroughly, suspected it might lead to the fort, and watched it, from that time and all night, by turns. No one approached it until the lunch-hour to-day, when they both—Ashton and Fordyce—saw you and your man near the entrance. Then, as they suppose, with a view to discovering how far the tunnel had yet to penetrate before reaching the fort, the man crept inside, and you walked towards the fort until within a few yards. Then they called up their men and arrested you both on the spot.—Is that correct, Campbell?'

Before I could reply, a knock at the door was followed by the entrance of an orderly, who informed me that Colonel Pryor desired my presence in the anteroom. I went at once, followed by Rankeilor. There were only two men—my accusers—present in the anteroom with Colonel Pryor when I entered. It was quite an informal inquiry; but I saw that the old 'chief' noted keenly my every word and look. I told the plain unvarnished tale, with simple directness, to Colonel Pryor, and he listened with courtesy. When I had ended, he looked towards Ashton and Fordyce.

'You found this tunnel yesterday afternoon, you say, gentlemen?'

'We did, sir, and we watched all night and all day; to-day, one or the other of us kept near it.'

The chief mused for a moment, his stern old face masked and inscrutable as that of the Sphinx. 'Did you leave any one on guard at the tunnel when you came to me first, to report? Who is there now?'

The two officers looked a little foolish.

'We did not post a sentry there after discovering the—tunnelers,' said Ashton, somewhat lamely. 'It will be time enough in the evening.'

'Well, gentlemen,' said the colonel in his short decisive manner, 'I do not see why Campbell should not have found out this tunnel as well as you, with intentions as innocent as your own.'

The officers were silent.

'It seems to me that you failed in your duty when you did not report such an important discovery to me last night. And it does not seem just to attach any stigma to Campbell's finding of it, unless you share it! If Campbell and his man had been the excavators, they would not have risked drawing attention to their work in broad daylight. I am greatly surprised at your finding no one there during the night, for certainly that tunnel was made in the hours of darkness! I shall post sentries there to-night. I think you had better confine yourselves to barracks till to-morrow afternoon—you three dis-

coverers, I mean—and let me deal alone with this henceforward.'

He left the room; and I never saw darker, angrier faces than were those of Ashton and Fordyce on hearing the colonel's ultimatum.

Without speaking to any of them, I returned to my own room, again followed by Rankeilor, who in his friendliest manner laid his hand on my shoulder.

'Campbell, old fellow, I don't mean to leave you alone till you make a clean breast of it! I see clearly that you suspect me of some complicity in this business, and I shall haunt you until you confess. Come, out with it.'

I gazed at him in bewildered fashion for an instant. Why should I be so anxious to shield this man's reputation, if he was himself so reckless of it? Or was this bold affectionate friendliness meant merely to draw out all my information and let him know where he stood? Well, he should have it! I would be reckless too, although the strong fascination of his look and manner, of the man altogether, had never been so strongly present to my mind as now.

'I don't suspect—I know, Rankeilor!' I said, looking earnestly at him. 'I found your diamond—where you lost it, in the very mouth of that tunnel, among the freshly-turned earth on the trowel!'

A series of rapid, startling changes crossed his features, leaving him as pale as death; but his eyes never flinched from their steady gaze into mine, only his hand dropped from my shoulder.

'You found my diamond there?—my mother's gift?' he said sternly.

'Yes; I found it there. I have it safely; and no eye has seen it but mine, nor shall any one hear of it from me, Rankeilor!'

His face softened again, and he replaced his hand on my shoulder with a smile. He had but opened his lips to speak, when a hideous sound, or rather a babel of sounds, arose from the opposite room in the same corridor: a rain of heavy blows, mingled with howls and loud protestations, and groans of—'Oh sahib! I not steal it! I not steal anything! Oh—oh, sahib!'

We both walked unceremoniously into Ashton's room, whence the sounds proceeded. It was not quite an unheard-of thing to find an officer beating his Hindu servant with his braces or anything that came handy; but Ashton was in a furious passion, and was kicking savagely as well. Without a moment's hesitation, Rankeilor sprang forward and wrenched the man's arm out of Ashton's angry grip.

'Go—run,' he said, and the poor wretch needed no second bidding.

Ashton turned fiercely on Rankeilor. 'How dare you interfere? The dog has been stealing! I have lost!'—He stopped short, looking blacker than a thunder-cloud.

'I know,' said Rankeilor quietly. 'You have lost my rose diamond, which you took from me last night at baccarat, knowing well that it represented more than five times the value of the amount I owed you! Ashton, you shall send in your papers to-morrow! Fordyce too.—I have felt for some time that "monkeys" and "ponies" had gone quite far enough in your quarters; but when it comes to tunnelling through to the fort

for money to supply your table, it *must* stop! I give you your choice: either send in your papers at once, or the whole story of where the diamond was found—among the fresh earth adhering to the trowel—shall be told openly and freely.'

'Bah! Say no more!' said Ashton, with face and voice of exceeding disgust. 'I did not mean to stay long in any case in a corps of cads and tradesmen! I shall exchange into a horse-regiment.'

'You were glad enough to win the money of the cads and tradesmen,' said Rankeilor coldly. 'However, so long as you and Fordyce retire at once, you can go where you please.—Come along, Campbell.' He took me by the arm, and we crossed again into my room.

'Is it all square now, lad?' he asked, with his winning smile. 'And will you restore me my mother's diamond? You say you found it.'

'Rankeilor, I sincerely beg your pardon for having suspected you!' I held out my hand; and he grasped it warmly.

'It was natural,' he said; 'but I could not bear to tell you *how* I had lost my mother's beautiful gift; and until my next remittance from home, I knew I should not be able to redeem it. That was my reason for asking if you could lend me any money.'

'And I could not,' I said ruefully. 'But, Rankeilor, how can you be sure that Ashton and Fordyce are the defaulters?'

'I'll tell you how,' he answered readily. 'And if I am not mistaken, the chief guesses it as shrewdly as I do. When they reported the case, the colonel told them he would see to it, in a half-careless sort of fashion; but he asked them to wait there, in his house, until he performed an important duty. They did so with pleasure; and the old fellow, taking me along, went straight to the tunnel, and did exactly what you and your man Petersen, it seems, did. I crawled in; he walked above, and I guided him by shouting. He examined the pickaxe and trowel: the earth on them was fresh, quite different from that in the entrance. I am certain he believes, as I do, that that earth was turned over last night!—Campbell, my dear fellow, I forgive you with all my heart for suspecting me of—dence knows what; but I refused utterly and indignantly to suspect *you* of the least approach to complicity in this—crime! Give me the full credit I deserve.' He laughed in his quiet cordial way; but I saw that he was a little hurt too. 'And let's "make a compact firm and sure" to help each other, and these young fledglings in our corps to escape from the snares of such fowlers as Ashton and Fordyce. Shall we?'

'I shall never play for money again while I live,' I said firmly. 'And I *don't* think I can ever distrust you again, Rankeilor.'

It was impossible for any one to guess whether Colonel Pryor suspected anything unusual in receiving the resignation of two officers on the same day. He could keep his own counsel—none better! The tunnel was safely blocked up, and the fort closely guarded. It was in 1860 that the incident occurred, and Rankeilor and I are still fast friends after thirty years. The snows of winter are beginning to besprinkle our heads, and our faces are tanned and weather-

beaten; but our hearts are fresh and firmly knit as in early manhood. His mother's diamond still shines on his finger, though she has long ago fallen asleep.

### RAILWAY ENGINE-DRIVERS.

BEFORE a man can become an Engine-driver he has to serve some years in the locomotive works of the company, where he learns all the parts and fittings of an engine; he is then eligible for the post of fireman; at this rank he may remain a long time; in fact, he is fortunate if he is made a driver in the course of three or four years. It will therefore be seen that an engine-driver is always a competent man. This is a rule, and, like all such, there is generally an exception to it; but there is only one to this, and the circumstances of the case made it necessary that incompetent men should be employed; but the exception is hardly likely to take place again. The Midland drivers' strike in 1887 compelled the company to fall back upon men who had not sufficient experience; but risky though this was, no serious accident resulted from it. Drivers are skilled men, and therefore their number is limited. Many of them on the different lines of the country could supervise the building of an engine; and many of the locomotive superintendents have spent years on the footplate of an engine before they rose to their present high position.

A man on being appointed a driver will try his hand at first with a slow goods-train; and having shown himself competent and careful, he will then have charge of an express goods or slow passenger train; and the height of his ambition is generally attained when he is called upon to drive such trains as the Flying Scotchman, the Wild Irishman, or the Flying Dutchman. The general public has no idea what driving engines of these express trains means. It is no exaggeration to say that while the train is running the driver's whole life is in his work, and that he has no time to think of anything else but his engine and the signals ahead. An express train often travels at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and then signals will be passed about every four minutes, and it can readily be understood that an engine travelling at that high rate of speed will require constant attention. The strain on a man's mind working an engine a long distance without stopping is very great, and could not be endured for many hours together; besides, it would not be safe for an engine to travel more than one hundred and eighty miles without being examined, and that distance is about the maximum any engine runs on one journey. Two such journeys is a good day's work for both man and engine. The average time on duty for the men is nine hours a day, beyond which they are paid overtime. When they are not running, their time is devoted to examining the engine. This is a very important duty; for should any accident or delay be caused through negligence on the part of the driver in not seeing that the machinery is in good working order, he will

be severely fined, and probably reduced. This applies equally to the men in charge of goods and slow passenger trains; but as their speed is not high and they have constant stoppages, the liability of their engines getting out of order is not so great.

Engines are very much like racehorses—they have little tricks and peculiarities of their own, and require humouring; for this reason, every driver keeps to his own engine as much as possible. The express engines of most lines cost between three and four thousand pounds. Their working career depends very much upon the road they have to travel. Steep gradients play sad havoc with them, and will shorten their lives by two or three years. The speed of engines is regulated by time tables; but there is such a thing as making up lost time. This depends on the driver. If he is of a cautious and steady turn of mind, he will act up to the time table, and be late rather than travel beyond the authorised speed. There are many men, however, who delight in the speed of their engines, and who glory when they have the chance of a little fast running. This can only be indulged in when trains are late and a long distance has to be run without stopping. As the question is often asked, 'Which is the fastest train in the world?' it would be well to give it here with the particulars. The honour belongs to the Great Northern Railway Company. Their train which leaves Grantham at 4.18 P.M. and runs through to London (King's Cross) without stopping, arriving there at 6.15 P.M., is the fastest train in the world, covering a distance of 105½ miles in one hour fifty-seven minutes—averaging fifty-four miles an hour the entire distance. The speed of this train at certain places will exceed the rate of sixty miles an hour; but the passenger is unconscious of this unusual celerity, as the train oscillates very little.

Drivers have to stand all weathers, and with very little protection. In the summer they are sweltering in heat above and below; in winter the lower parts of their bodies are baked, and the upper parts are nearly frozen; but this they bear without much grumbling. The only weather they dread and do grumble at with just cause is the foggy and snowy weather; for to these two conditions of our climate can be debited the great majority of railway accidents. With all the care imaginable, drivers can never feel themselves safe in such weather till their work is done.

Behind the black and greasy faces of these men there are brave hearts, and seldom do they forget their duty to the public in times of accident. Nine times out of ten they could leap from their engine without much injury in cases of collision; but nine times out of ten they don't, but stick to their post till they know they can do no good. The recorded cases of their bravery, and the narrow escapes from accident owing to it, give a very poor idea of the actual number of such cases. Railway officials are never very communicative about an accident that all the world knows of, and they believe in the saying, 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.' The public, therefore, are kept in ignorance of all but accomplished facts. But every year is adding to the safety of railway travelling; the splendid brakes

now in use on the more important lines have given even drivers and guards easy minds; and a thorough good system of fog-signalling would render their lives about as safe as that of the ordinary mechanic. Drivers and firemen are under a locomotive superintendent, and are only under the orders of other departments as far as the working of the trains is concerned. The large railways of England build their own engines and employ thousands of hands; these are all under the locomotive department. Crewe and Doncaster are the locomotive centres for the London and North-western and the Great Northern Railways respectively.

#### ACROSS THE SEAS.

Her foot falls faintly on the sand;  
Her yearning heart would fain divine  
What passes in that far-off land  
Beyond the dim horizon's line.

A white wing flutters on the blue;  
Her heart sways with the soft south breeze;  
Ah! would she were a bird, and knew  
To beat her way across the seas.

And to the vaulted heaven she lifts,  
From alien shores, her dreamy eyes;  
She follows where a white cloud drifts  
Its northward way athwart the skies.

And will it meet the upward gaze  
Of him whose thought is all for her?  
And will he see it, in amaze,  
And wonder why his soul should stir?

Or will his heart at once divine  
That she has watched it far away—  
That in its fragrant memories twine  
Of love of him of yesterday?

Alas! alas! her eyes are wet  
With foolish tears—the cloud above  
Drifts by—eternal bonds are set  
To human thought and human love.

And yet, who knows—it still may be  
The moment hath its perfect part  
In life, and speeds across the sea  
To spend its sunshine in his heart.

MYRA.

#### \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Offerings of Verse should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

If the above rules are complied with, the Editor will do his best to ensure the safe return of ineligible papers.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.